

United States Attorney's Office Northern District of Iowa



PRESS RELEASE

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FORMER ILLINOIS POLICE OFFICER SENTENCED TO OVER 31 YEARS FOR TRAVELING TO IOWA TO HAVE SEX WITH 13-YEAR-OLD BOY

Internet Predator Sexually Abused 14 Boys in 4 States and Involved in International Abuse

United States Attorney Matt M. Dummermuth announced today that a part-time police officer from Illinois who traveled to Iowa to have sex with a 13-year-old boy and taped the encounter was sentenced today to more than 31 years in federal prison.

DONALD W. RAGER, age 41, from Grayslake, Illinois, received the prison term after June 22, 2007, guilty pleas to one count of traveling in interstate commerce to engage in sexual conduct with a minor, one count of producing child pornography, and one count of transporting child pornography across a state line. **RAGER** was a part-time police officer who operated a security business in Grayslake.

According to information disclosed in court, on February 12, 2006, **RAGER** traveled from Illinois to Dubuque, Iowa, to meet with a 13-year-old boy he met in an Internet chat room. Using the internet, **RAGER** persuaded the boy to meet him at a Dubuque mall. **RAGER** met the boy at the mall and took the boy to a Dubuque hotel. Earlier that day, **RAGER** checked into the hotel room and set up a video camera for the purpose of recording the planned sexual encounter. **RAGER** sexually abused the boy and videotaped the encounter. He took the boy back to the mall and took the videotape back to Illinois.

The boy reported the incident in April 2007, and law enforcement officers made undercover contacts with **RAGER**. During those contacts, **RAGER** made plans to meet with the boy for an additional sexual encounter on Friday, May 18, 2007, in Dubuque. **RAGER** was arrested when he arrived in Dubuque for the meeting on May 18. **RAGER** was in possession of the videotape of the February 2006 encounter and additional images of child pornography on a laptop computer. The videotape contained two additional videos of **RAGER** molesting minor boys. The images on the computer included some that portrayed sadistic sexual conduct and other depictions of violence.

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In addition to traveling to Dubuque to have sex with the 13-year-old boy, **RAGER** traveled to Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin where he sexually abused 13 other boys between the ages of 14 and 16. He met his victims over the Internet and communicated using instant messaging, E-mail, and chat services. He used a webcam to engage in cybersex and used the Internet to send nude pictures of himself to his victims and to send child pornography to other adults.

RAGER also was involved over the Internet with a man from London, England, who sexually abused a 10-year-old boy. **RAGER** watched while the man had sex with the boy and broadcast it live by webcam. That man and three others have now been charged by English authorities.

"This case highlights the real dangers children face on the Internet," said Dummermuth. "If it can happen in Dubuque, Iowa, it can happen anywhere. Parents need to be vigilant in protecting their children from Internet predators, and children need to know the dangers. This is why prosecutors in our office and others in our District will have been to 147 middle schools in 49 counties in the Northern District of Iowa before the end of this school year telling over 40,000 students how to be safe on the Internet. Hopefully, we can avoid future cases like this one." **[see related press release dated April 23, 2008]**

RAGER was sentenced in Cedar Rapids by United States District Court Chief Judge Linda R. Reade. Judge Reade noted that **RAGER** was the most dangerous and prolific sex offender she had ever encountered in her court – state or federal. She said this case demonstrates why parents must carefully monitor kids' Internet use.

Judge Reade sentenced **RAGER** to 376 months' imprisonment. A special assessment of \$300 was imposed, and **RAGER** must also serve a life term of supervised release after the prison term. There is no parole in the federal system.

RAGER has been held without bond since his arrest on May 18, 2007, and continues to be held in the United States Marshal's custody until he can be transported to a federal prison.

This case was filed as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, the United States Attorney Department of Justice created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys' Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafefchildhood.gov.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Peter Deegan and was investigated by the Dubuque County Attorney's Office, Dubuque Police Department, Dubuque County Sheriff's Department, and Federal Bureau of Investigation.